

Spring 1-15-2005

ENG 2601-002

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English 2601
 Spring 2005
 e-mail: cfrh@eiu.edu
 Office hours: MWF 8-9; MF10-11

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Texts: Homer, The Odyssey (Lombardo, trans)
 Wilkie, Literature of the Western World
 Hanning and Ferrante (trans) Lais of Marie de France
 Dante, The Inferno (Ciardi, trans)
 Boccaccio, The Decameron (Musa and Bondanella, trans)
 Grene and Lattimore (trans) Greek Tragedies vol 3, 1
 Rabelais, Gargantua

Goals: The premise of the course is that there are certain works so central to western literature that they simply must be read if that literature is to be understood. Writers often respond to earlier writers in their work; Homer, Dante, Petrarch, and others have served as models for countless English writers. Obviously, it's useful to have read them.

But these works also continue to fascinate in their own right, and the bulk of class-time will be devoted simply to talking about them: what they're saying, how we respond to them, what makes them work. As we talk about them, it's important to remember that we're reading them in translation and many centuries after they were written. In some ways they will remain unreachable, therefore; we read them only in the light of our own culture and language, and must struggle to penetrate the profoundly different worlds from which they emerged. In other ways, though, they are strangely contemporary, posing questions about how one should live, what one should value, whom one should admire . . . questions, obviously, that still concern us.

At the end of the semester you should have a greater familiarity with various literary genres, literary periods, and the western literary canon, as well as a bunch of new books to love.

Policies: English Department statement on plagiarism:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) --has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of NC for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

Plan to hand in papers on time. If you're having problems, let me know. **Papers a week or more late will not be accepted at all;** reading responses not handed in **at the relevant classes** will not be accepted.

This class involves a heavy reading load; make sure you plan your time so that you can keep up with the reading. Attendance at every class is expected. Note that a portion of the grade is based on class participation and reading responses--both of which require keeping up with the reading and (obviously) being in class. **Excessive absences will result in a grade of 0 for the in-class portion of your grade.**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Requirements: midterm and final 30% (10/20)

3 essays 40% (10, 15, 15)

responses, brief at-home and in-class writing assignments 20%

participation, group presentations 10%

Essay grades will be based on Standards for Grading Themes at EIU. I plan to use number rather than letter grades; this will convert into your final grade as follows: 91-100=A; 81-90=B; 70-80=C. 65-69=D. Because I grade on a 100-point scale, missing assignments affect the grade tremendously.

Responses: Almost every week you will be required to hand in a 1-page typed response to the assigned reading for any one of the three class periods (you choose which). The response must be about the reading due on the day you hand it in; it should reflect your thoughts BEFORE class discussion. I will not accept responses handed in after the class period in which the relevant assignment has been discussed, nor will I accept responses from students who have not been in class. Responses must be handed in at the end of the class for which they are relevant and must be typed. The point of the responses is to stimulate your thinking about the assigned reading, to give you practice in analyzing it on your own, and to facilitate your involvement in class discussion.

I will often give suggested topics for your response; you might also choose a single question from the list at end of syllabus to answer, or use an observation of your own as a starting point. Feel free to ask questions at the end. The only absolute requirements:

1. Focus on a single issue throughout your response (a single theme or character or passage or event or conflict or connection or image or observation)
2. Establish your focus in opening sentence; then go into more detail about it in the rest of your response.
3. Include a direct quotation (with page number in parentheses) in the course of your response.

I will grade responses on a 10-point scale, in terms of their completeness, depth, precision, thoughtfulness. Every response should be anchored in a careful reading of the text; ALWAYS include at least one brief direct quotation as part of your response.

If illness or personal emergency keeps you from being in class on the day on which you intended to hand in a response, hand in a response for another class day that week instead; if that's not possible, talk to me so you won't be penalized for problems beyond your control.

Presentations: At times I'll ask you to discuss assigned texts in groups of 4 or 5. Occasionally I'll ask each group to take responsibility for a portion of the reading assignment and present it to the rest of the class. You will have time in class to prepare these 10-12 minute presentations. Your presentation will be the only way your classmates will have access to this material, so make sure your presentation is clear, interesting, and fun. I will give you feedback on these, and they will count toward your in-class activities grade.

EWP: this is a writing-intensive course; your final paper may be used in your electronic writing portfolio.

Syllabus (tentative)

I. Ancient World: The Greeks

MJanuary 10: introduction to course.

W12: Homer, *The Odyssey* (Lombardo transl): Books 1-2

Fri 14: *Odyssey* Books 3-4. Response #1 due W or F.

M17: No class

W19: *Odyssey* Books 5-8

F21: Odyssey Books 9-12. Template due F.

M24: Odyssey Books 13, 15, 16 (14 optional)

W26: 18-21 (20 optional)

F28: 22-24. Response #2 due M, W or F.

M 31: Sappho in Wilkie and Hurt. Essay #1 due (2-3 pp).

WFebruary 2: in Grene and Lattimore, Euripides, The Bacchae

F4: Bacchae. Bring anthology and both Grene and Lattimore volumes: decide on group tragedy.

M7: Greek tragedy: group discussions

W9: Read Aristotle in Wilkie and Hurt (1229-1238). Group discussions.

F11: Group presentations

M14: Aristophanes, Lysistrata

W 16: Lysistrata. Response #3 due M or W

F 18: no class

M21: Plato, "The Apology of Socrates" in Wilkie and Hurt

W23: Plato

II. The Romans

F25: Virgil, the Aeneid in Wilkie and Hurt. Book 1 (973-991). Response #4 due M, W, of F

M28: Virgil, Book 2 (Book 3 optional)

WMarch 2: Virgil, Book 4

F4: Virgil, Book 6. Response #5 due M, W or F: explication.

M7: Midterm

III. The Middle Ages

W9: The Lais of Marie de France, "Guigemar" (separate volume)

F11: Marie, "Yonec," "Bisclavret," "Milun." Hand in essay #2 (3-4 pp).

Spring break

M21: Dante, Inferno, cantos 1-2 (separate volume, Ciardi transl)

W23: cantos 3-6. For fun, see <http://www.4degreez.com/misc/dante-inferno-test.mv>

F25: cantos 7-11. Groups choose from cantos 12-30. Response #6 due M, W or F

M28: Group discussions

W30: Group presentations

FApril 1: Read those cantos 12-30 that you haven't yet read.

M4: cantos 31-34. Final canto of Paradiso, in Wilkie and Hurt.

IV. The Renaissance

W6: Petrarch. Hand-out

F8: Petrarch. Bring lyrics of contemporary love song.

M10: Boccaccio in Musa and Bondanella 1-34
W12: Boccaccio 69-95; 98-107
F14: Boccaccio 133-47. Response #7 due M, W or F

M17: Rabelais (separate volume) author's prologue (37-39); ch 1, 3, 4, 6-8, 13
W19: Rabelais ch. 14-29
F21: Rabelais, ch. 32-33; 44-46; 51-58. Response #8 due M, W or F

M 24: Cervantes, DQ 1990-2009. Hand in essay #3 (3-4 pp).
W26: 2009-2019
F28: 20019-30.

There will be a cumulative final exam during exam week.

Response questions: focus on a SINGLE question or choose your own issue:

What is the main character like (physically, mentally, gestures, speech, values)?

What parallels or contrasts do you see between two characters?

Focus on a minor character and discuss why he/she's there

How is the setting described? Is there a contrast set up between two settings?

Focus on a single conflict (within a character? Between characters? Between a character and the environment?)

Is there an authorial mouthpiece? How do you know? What's she/he saying?

What is the narrator's relation to the action? Why is he/she telling the story? How is his/her values shaping what he/she notices?

Significance of title?

How does a character change during the course of the work?

Is there a crucial moment or turning point when someone makes a big mistake or does something right?

Is there an object or moment that works symbolically, or a pattern of imagery or a key word that recurs?

What historical events would it be helpful to know about?

Look up one allusion and explain its significance.

To what extent does the ending tie up loose ends?

Is the ending "happy?" For whom? Who gets left out?

How does the work depict gender, race, sexuality, or class?

To what extent does the work as a whole reinforce values you share or don't share?

For poems: FIRST: read in terms of punctuation, not line breaks. Then look up words you don't know.

Discuss the poem's speaker and his/her situation.

What is the poem's tone? How do you know? Is there any irony?

How is the poem structured and how does this structure tie in with its meaning?

Does the poem fall into sections? How do they build on or contrast with each other?

What do you notice about the sounds of words or rhythmic patterns?

Pick a single word that seems significant, look it up in the dictionary, and discuss its significance.

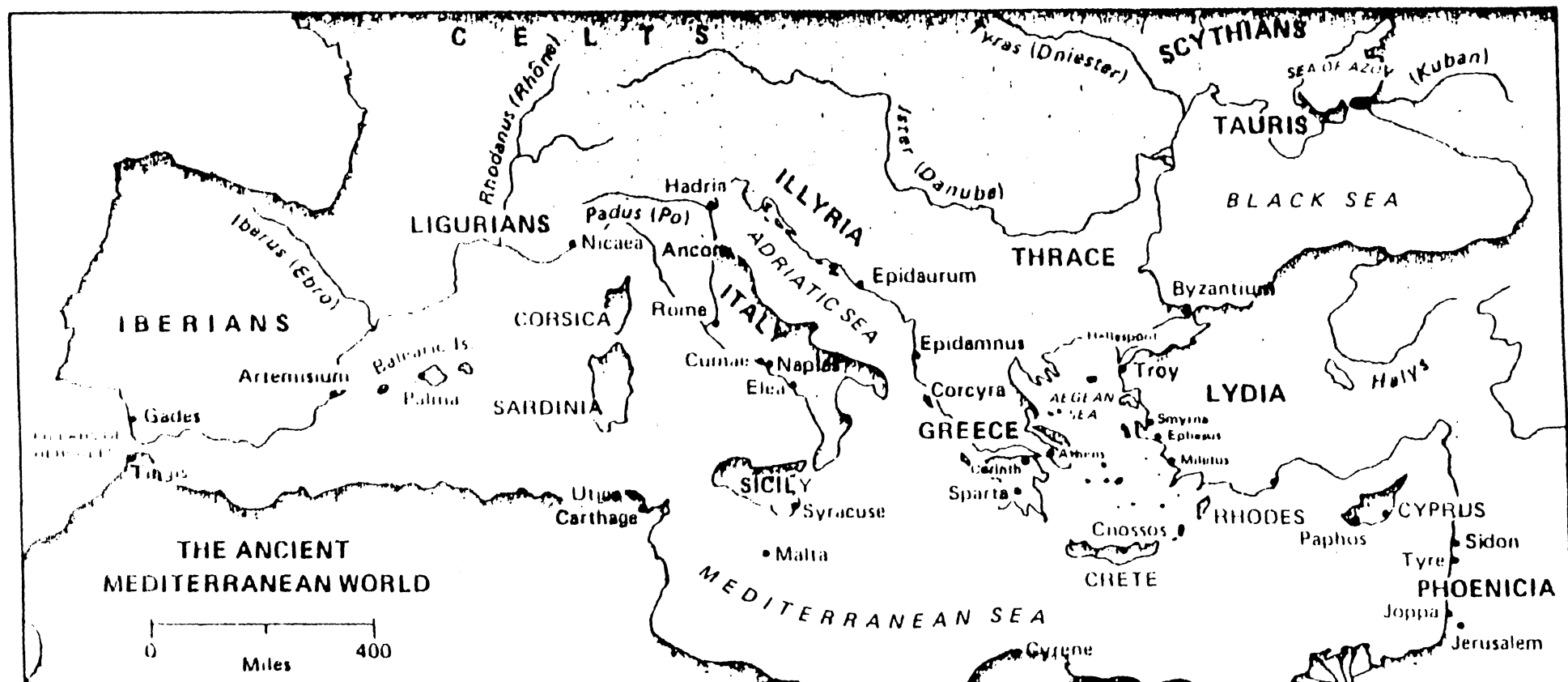
Do the speaker's thoughts change during the course of the poem? Are there two or more viewpoints?

What conflicts do you see in the poem?

Discuss the connotations of a few words

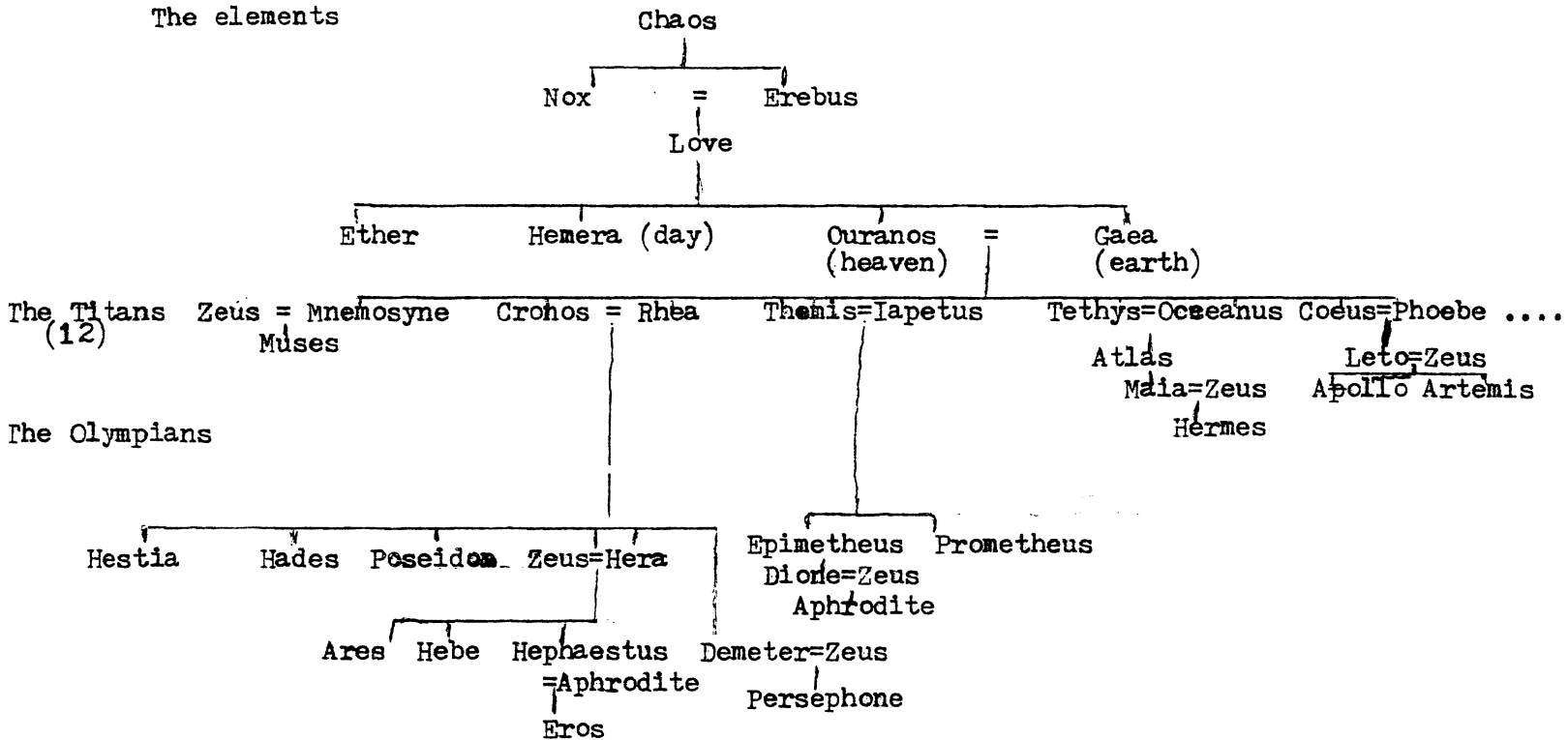
Discuss a pattern of images (lots of disease references? Flowers?)

Is there a particularly difficult phrase or line? What ideas do you have about what it means?



Major Gods

The elements



Greeks

Akhaïans (Akhaia)
 Argives (Argos)
 Danaans
 (among allies: Myrmidons)

Gk commander-in-chief: Agamemnon (=Clytemnestra; son Orestes, daughters Iphigenia, Electra)
 Agamemnon's brother: Menelaus (=Helen), from Sparta
 allies: Odysseus (=Penelope, son Telemachus), from Ithaka
 Akhilleus, leader of Myrmidons
 Nestor, old + wise
 Helen + Clytemnestra, daughters of Leda=Zeus

Trojans (Ilion)

Trojan king: Priam (=Hecuba)
 his sons: Hector (=Andromache)
 Paris (elopes with Helen)
 Deiphobus

Gods (12 main)

Zeus (king. heaven. thunder) = Hera

his brothers: Poseidon (sea) and Hades (underworld)

his daughter: Athena (born from his forehead, fully armed, without a mother. owl. handicrafts, intelligence, war/peace. virgin)

sons: Hephaestus (lame, blacksmith, = Aphrodite); Ares (war)

Hermes (messenger); Apollo (sun, music, prophecy)

daughters: Artemis (moon, virgin, huntress) Aphrodite (?) (beauty, love)

sisters: Hestia (hearth), Hera (marriage, maternity), Demeter (harvest, fertility)

Structure of the Odyssey

- Bk 1: conference of gods. Athena appeals to Zeus to help Odysseus
Athena goes to Telemachos
2. Telemachos calls assembly. Departs for news of father.
3. Finds Nestor at feast, Pylos.
4. finds Menelaus at edding, Sparta. stories of Helen and Menalus.
back in Ithaka, plot of suitors.
5. conference of gods. Hermes goes to Kalypso. Od. leaves Ogygia
on raft, gets Ino's scarf, lands at Skheria.
6. Athena in dreams tells Nausikaa to do her washing. Od. finds Naus
kaa by river.
7. Od. enters town in fog, gets hospitality from Arete and Alkinoos
8. Assembly of Phaiaikians. Feast, Demodokos sings (about Akhains'
homecoming, then about Ares and Aphrodite; later about Trojan Hors
Alkinoos asks Od, who are you?
9. [Od's story] Ismaros, Lotos Eaters, Cyclops
10. Aiolia, Laistrygonians, Circe
11. Hades
12. Sirens, Skylla/Kharybdis, Helios
Then I got to Ogygia . . . but I told you that part. (cf p. 118)
13. Od arrives in Ithaka, encounter with Athena
14. Eumaios. Od's fake story about where he's from, identity
15. Telemakhos returns. Eumaios' story about his origins, identity
16. reunion of father and son
17. Od. as beggar
18. Penelope appears
19. Eurykleia washes Od.
20. OD and Athena
21. Bow
22. revenge
23. Od + Penelope
24. resolution.

books 1-8 take up 18 days (17 betn Ogygia and Skheria)
books 9-12 recount 10 preceding years
books 13-24: a few days

Speak, Memory—

Of the cunning hero,
The wanderer, blown off course time and again
After he plundered Troy's sacred heights.

Speak

Of all the cities he saw, the minds he grasped,
The suffering deep in his heart at sea
As he struggled to survive and bring his men home
But could not save them, hard as he tried—
The fools—destroyed by their own recklessness . . .